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DEMOCRATIC COORDINATION OF SCIENTIFIC EFFORTS¹

COOPERATION and coordination are the very essence of all evolution and progress, biological, social, political, moral, industrial or what not. We acknowledge without controversy the fundamental rôle of these factors in the evolution of living things. They constitute the woof and warp of the social fabric, without them political machinery can not function, and the wheels of industry cease to turn; they condition every ethical and moral principle. It is the glory of science that it has uncovered and made clear this fundamental fact of organic evolution. But in the organization of its own activities how little has it profited by its own discovery. The Honorable Elihu Root has well said:²

Science, like charity, should begin at home, and has done so very imperfectly. Science has been arranging, classifying, methodizing, simplifying everything except itself. It has made possible the tremendous modern development of the power of organization which has so multiplied the effective power of human effort as to make the difference from the past seem to be of kind rather than of degree. It has organized itself very imperfectly. Scientific men are only recently realizing that the principles which apply to success on a large scale in transportation and manufacture and general staff work apply to them; that the difference between a mob and an army does not depend upon occupation or purpose but upon human nature; that the effective power of a great number of scientific men may be increased by organization just as the effective power of a great number of laborers may be increased by military discipline.

It may well seem strange to the layman that

¹ Presented in the symposium on "Our present duty as botanists" before the joint session of the Botanical Society of America and the American Phytopathological Society, December 26, 1918, at Baltimore, Md.

² SCIENCE, N. S., 48, 532-534, 1918.